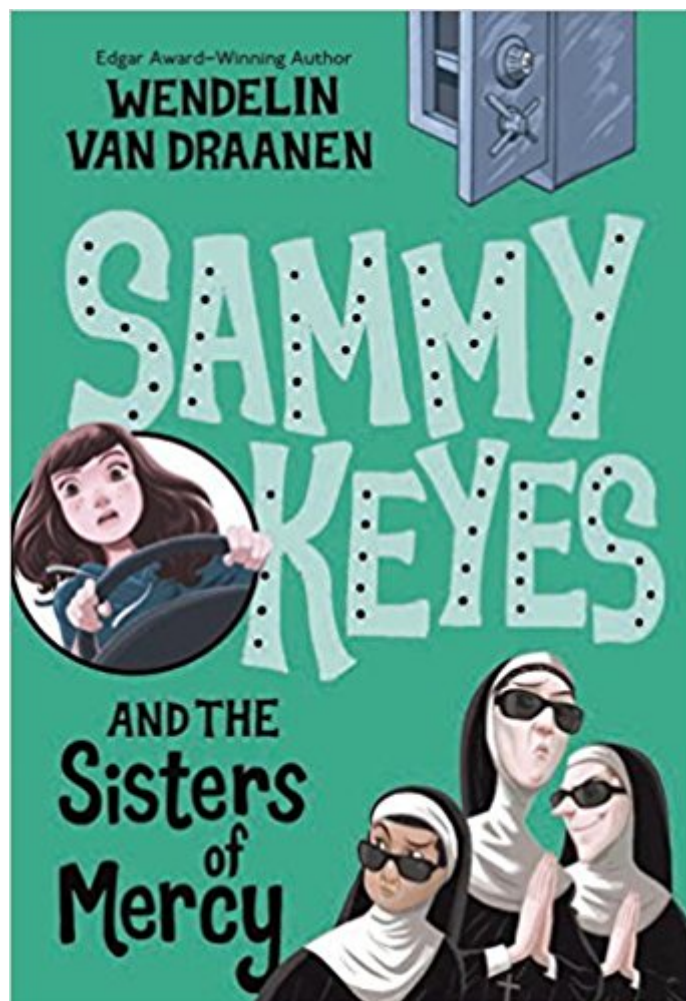


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# Sammy Keyes And The Sisters Of Mercy



## Synopsis

Sometimes it's hard to tell the saints from the sinners...Sammy was supposed to be in church to get out of trouble, not into more. But while she's at St. Mary's working off some school detention time, a valuable cross goes missing and Sammy becomes the prime suspect. She knows she's innocent, and also what it feels like to lose something important. Her treasured catcher's mitt has been stolen--heartless Heather must have taken it to throw Sammy off her game in the upcoming softball play-offs. Trouble is, it's working. Sammy needs that glove back. Throw in nuns in feather boas, a homeless girl in high-tops, a carrot-chomping dog, and a safe that needs cracking, and you've got just another week in the life of Sammy Keyes. Praise for the Sammy Keyes series: "Sammy Keyes is feisty, fearless, and funny. A top-notch investigator!" • "New York Times" bestselling author Sue Grafton "The sleuth delights from start to finish. Keep your binoculars trained on Sammy Keyes." • "Publishers Weekly" "Sammy Keyes is the hottest sleuth to appear in children's books since Nancy Drew." • "The Boston Globe

## Book Information

Series: Sammy Keyes (Book 3)

Paperback: 240 pages

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Age Range: 10 and up

Grade Level: 5 and up

## Customer Reviews

Grade 4-7-Actress Tara Sands narrates this third adventure in the series by Wendelin Van Draanen (Knopf, 1999). This time Sammy is serving detention at St. Mary's church where she find herself a



Keyes series book is very good

This book, which is the last of a group that I bought at a used book sale to complete a purchase of a couple of books that I wanted but had to find several others to make up "ten for a dollar," is the third of a series; the first two are *Sammy Keyes and the Hotel Thief*, which won the 1998 Edgar Award for Best Children's Mystery, and *Sammy Keyes and the Skeleton Man*. Samantha (Sammy) Keyes is a seventh-grade girl at William Rose Junior High School at Santa Martina (probably in California). Her mother, the Lady Lana who has gone to Hollywood to become a movie star, has dumped her off to live with Grams whose senior apartment house doesn't allow kids. Sammy doesn't even know who her father is, but she does have his catcher's mitt. In *The Sisters of Mercy*, Sammy has abused the school's PA system and is serving twenty hours of detention by doing community service. Grams has worked it out for her to do it at St. Mary's Church, helping Father Mayhew clean and paint his office while the Sisters of Mercy, a trio of singing nuns named Bernice, Abigail, and Clarice, are in town to do a fundraiser for the church. However, Father Mayhew's ivory cross is stolen, and Sammy is blamed at first because she was the only one in the room, so she is sent to work at the soup kitchen with Sisters Josephine and Mary Margaret and Brother Phil and also help the Sisters of Mercy with their fliers. Along the way we also learn about Sammy's catching on her girls' softball team, her problems at school with her arch-nemesis Heather Acosta, and her efforts to help a homeless girl named Holly Janquell who comes to the soup kitchen. Father Mayhew eventually decides that Sammy didn't take the cross, but who stole it? Was it Josephine and Mary Margaret who are trying to finance a trip to Las Vegas? Was it Brother Phil who is mad at Father Mayhew for holding him back from becoming a priest? Was it Holly who might have sold it for money to survive? And when Sammy's own catcher's mitt is stolen, will she ever get it back? Sammy is a sympathetic character with all her disadvantages, even though she has this penchant for getting into trouble and comes across as a little to "street-smart." I suppose the unknown father and irresponsible mother are included to make the story seem "relevant" to today's kids, but many of us prefer stories with less dysfunctional families. However, Grams is always there to provide some stability in Sammy's life. There are many things to like about the book, including some important lessons learned and some tender moments experienced. However, there are some things which a few parents might not care for. These include childish slang terms for dog manure, urination, and the rear end; some common euphemisms; one child's calling another "turdface;" and some instances of the words "Lord" and "God" used as interjections. Remember, this is junior high, but in a softball game, a girl at bat sticks her fanny out and all the boys whistle. In fact, much of the activity taking place at school

will remind homeschooling families of why we have chosen to homeschool. And as you can imagine, there are a lot of references to Roman Catholic Church beliefs and practices. *Girls' Life* said, "Move over, Nancy Drew--a new sleuth is on the scene." Well, Sammy is not too bad, but Nancy, you can just stay where you are. I for one appreciate your old fashioned values.

Instead of serving detention at her junior high, Samantha "Sammy" Keyes is putting in twenty hours of community service at St. Mary's church after school. It's almost fun until Father Mayhew's valuable ivory cross is missing. At first he suspects her and she's banished to the soup kitchen. She has to clear her name and fast. Then other things go missing and she's on the case with a whole bunch of suspects to choose from. The church's regular staff, a group of traveling gospel singing nuns, a homeless girl, and a carrot eating dog who devours everything in sight. What's really weird is that as she investigates she realizes that St. Mary's is a lot like junior high with its gossip, jealousies, secrets, and cliques. Things aren't perfect at school either. Her softball team is in the middle of the final playoffs. Someone has taken her catcher's mitt. It's the only thing she has of her father. Its theft is more than a little upsetting and threatens to affect her game. Although the mystery is a little predictable, it's fun. Full of quirky characters sure to keep a smile on any reader's face. You can't help cheering for Sammy as she battles tween angst and at the same time tracks down the thieves at both school and St Mary's. [kidsmysteryreviews.com](http://kidsmysteryreviews.com)

Lots of series can be read out of order, (Nancy Drew, Hardy Boys), without losing much. That's true of the Sammy Keyes books, since each is a stand alone. But, I've read a couple of them now, and realize that the books become deeper, and the Sammy character becomes more interesting, complicated and developed, from book to book. There's a big difference in the reading experience between, say, "Sammy Keyes and the Hotel Thief", which is book one, and "Sammy Keyes and the Psycho Kitty Queen", which is number nine. "Sisters of Mercy" is number three, and is still pretty much a juvenile mystery/adventure. If your young reader really likes it I'd recommend starting with the first volume and working through them. They're all good.

Wow! What is there to say? It's wonderful. full of deep, rich, character description. Not scary but suspenseful. My friends and me have read it and loved it. This compelling fast paced story will be liked by girls and possibly boys ages 7 through 14. It takes you on a journey through the eyes of the fun, witty, smart mouthed, Sammy Keyes who lives in a senior highrise with her grandmother. (Shhhhh! Don't tell anybody. she's not aloud to be there). Sammy is working off a detention in her

church, when a cross and some golden goblets are stolen. Could it be the homeless girl Holly? The strict, angry Sister Josephine? The bingo playing Sister Mary Margeret? The visitors from out of town who are doing a fundraiser for the church, The sisters of mercy? Or the priest himself Father Mayhew? Take the journey with Sammey for a hilarious, fun, adventurous, roller coaster ride that you will love.

That Sammy Keyes is such a detective. Nancy Drew better watch out there is a 7th grade crime solving detective on the case. I like this book a lot because there is a 7th grader solving mysteries. I mean she is an ordinary kid in middle school going through what real 7th graders go through and she still solves mysteries and she won't give up on them no matter how long it takes her. She goes through controversy and things like that. This book "Sammy Keyes and the Sisters of Mercy" is a very good book. I recommend all of you guys to read it. I am not a mystery type person, but still this is a book for mystery or non-mystery type people should read. This book is better than another Sammy Keyes book I read and I would have given that book almost 4 stars. I only read three books of Sammy Keyes, but I can't wait until I get my hands on another Sammy Keyes book.

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